

## News - February 2003

### FAO and UNESCO seek firm support from donors for education programmes for rural people

More than 60 representatives from multi-lateral and bilateral development agencies, foundations, NGOs and Universities met in Rome on 12th and 13th of December, 2002, at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization, to participate in the workshop "[Education for Rural People: targeting the poor.](#)"

Effective coordination between development agencies can improve education for rural people, a critical issue for reducing poverty and inequality in a world in which 70% of the poor live in rural areas. This was the point of departure for the participants in the event, convened by FAO and UNESCO in order to debate new political answers that must address the demand for education in the rural world, to share their activities in this area and to exchange their opinions on this matter.

The first discussion panel focused on the mechanisms for intervention in education for rural people. The [Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers \(PRSP\)](#), the [United Nations Assistance Development Framework \(UNDAF\)](#), the "Education for All" Initiative and the [UN System Network for Rural Development and Food Security](#) were presented as possible mechanisms for intervention. The appropriate indicators to evaluate the reduction in the number of rural people without access to education and the quality of education were being sought by the second discussion panel. Finally appropriate measures for following the progress of the [Education for All](#) Initiative were addressed in a third panel.

The Extension, Education and Communication Service (SDRE) of FAO, that organized the Workshop with technical support from UNESCO and financial assistance from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recently revealed the outcomes of the event:

- a shared concern between the development agencies of the importance of Education for Rural People as an essential component in poverty reduction strategies;
- an increase in coordination between development agencies to support the components of Education for Rural People in the coordination frameworks of donors;
- an exchange of experiences, lessons learned and better practices in this area;
- a commitment for meaningful support to countries wishing to incorporate specific components of rural education into their national education plans;
- The identification of action required for the next steps of the FAO/UNESCO Initiative on Education for Rural People.

Click [here](#) to read the joint FAO/UNESCO Study: Education for rural development: Towards new policy responses.

Click [here](#) to read the Director General of FAO's speech at the launch of the "Education for Rural People" Initiative during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002).

Click [here](#) to read Food for thought: Education as a tool to fight hunger and poverty.

Click [here](#) to read Education for Rural People: The FAO and UNESCO are making a joint call for Education for

Rural People.

Click [here](#) to read the Report of the Education for rural people: Aid agencies workshop

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